

A D D R E S S

BEFORE

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF

DELAWARE COLLEGE,

AT

COMMENCEMENT, JUNE 25, 1845.

NEWARK, DEL.

BY WILLARD HALL.



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DELAWARE COLLEGE, JUNE 25, 1845.

DEAR SIR,—We express no more than the real feelings of the whole College, in declaring our high gratification and delight with your excellent and appropriate Address ; and in behalf of the Athenæan and Delta Phi Societies, return our warmest thanks, and earnestly request a copy of your address for publication.

Yours truly,

ALEXANDER PARKINS,
SANFORD S. CULVER,
JAMES R. LOFLAND,
THOMAS R. BLANDY,
EPHER WHITAKER,
WILLIAM SIMONTON, JR.

Joint Committee of the Athenæan and Delta Phi Societies of Delaware College.

HON. WILLARD HALL.

WILMINGTON, JUNE 27, 1845.

GENTLEMEN,—It is gratifying to me to learn by yours of the 25th, that the Address delivered that day by your request, before the Literary Societies of Delaware College, met their approbation.

If the publication of the Address will produce good to compensate the cost, I have no objection to it ; but I should much regret being the occasion of a useless expenditure. It is worthy of special consideration, in view of the great abundance of printed matter, whether it be advisable to incur this expense. The interest of these things frequently passes with the occasion. I leave this to your “second thought,” hoping that civility to me will not bias it.

I shall, without hesitation give a copy for publication, if upon further thought it be deemed expedient.

Very respectfully yours,

WILLARD HALL.

MESSRS. ALEXANDER PARKINS,
SANFORD S. CULVER,
JAMES R. LOFLAND,
THOMAS R. BLANDY,
EPHER WHITAKER,
WILLIAM SIMONTON. } *Committee.*

ADDRESS.

THERE are two positions from which the survey of life—our own life—is peculiarly interesting. You occupy one, I the other. The views and impressions, as we stand in the one or other of these positions, are very different. You looking to the future, are filled with busy thoughts and solitudes respecting what you shall do, how you shall live, what shall be the specific objects of your pursuit, how you shall make good your own aspirations, or come up to the expectations of those so dear to you, that their gratification is matter of more intense anxiety than your own welfare. In one aspect, the prospect will be brilliant with promise; change the bearing, and discouragement will overcast it. In every aspect, when in anticipation you have tasked to the utmost your ability, your time, your means, the most elevated aim, the most far-reaching hope returns upon and terminates in **SELF**. I use the expression, not in a bad sense, but in unison with your own consciousness, that there is so much to be done for yourselves, you can have little indeed to spare for any thing beside.

From my position it is rational, if not natural, to look backward; the past constitutes nearly the whole of life. The question of concern less respects, what is to be done? but it comes home with absorbing earnestness, what has been done? Under the shadow which in this aspect stretches over life, all terminating in self, disappears; no foot-print is seen; and no pleasurable emotion arises except upon discerning something that has been of use to others, has tended to benefit society, has so operated as to justify a reasonable belief there is some point in the world better than it otherwise would have been.

In your state of mind, almost the certain result of the position from which you survey life, and the sentiments and feelings which the survey naturally produces, upon seeing a man in old age, possessed of enormous wealth, the acquisition of his enterprise and industry, whatever your poetry might suggest, there would be the forced assent of your prudence, that he had realized the thing to be desired; and you

would feel no discontent in contemplating a like consummation of your own course. To one in an advanced stage, serious and thoughtful, looking upon the past, the same subject would occasion most gloomy reflections, by the evidence of so much life, the energy of an immortal spirit, expended ; so much care and toil and pains of an immortal spirit, bestowed in gathering a vast heap to that spirit utterly worthless ; so much done, and that by a being indued with the power, and the greatness, and the glory of immortality, and all nothing !—the facts being a manifestation palpable to sense of greatness of labour successfully applied, boldness of projects fully achieved, and vastness of results completely attained—all the emptiness of nothing. Life worn with labour—its greater portion wasted in anxiety and weariness—to swell the inventory of an estate after death, surprising by the number of its pages, and the fullness of its columns ; while the spirit of the prosperous accumulator, forever separated from the fruits of his cares and toils, if it could be heard from its returnless bourne, would proclaim in stronger language than I can use—all nothing ! If you inquire the influence of such a life upon the world, in passing through it, and take the best supposition, you will find that men have been taught to deal hard and sharp with their fellows ; to engross themselves with worldliness, to obtain more than their proper share in the way of business—fair dealing according to the laws of business, but still more than their proper share in some way—and to make the love of gain a predominant passion. Bunyan drew a very just picture, when he represented the eager pursuit of property by a man with a muck rake, bent to the earth, scraping together filth, while a radiant crown suspended above his head, inviting his acceptance, could not be seen, because his employment in gathering garbage so entirely occupied him. I have adduced this as a specimen for the sake of illustration, to exhibit and impress the difference of views upon setting out in life and in closing it. Can we not combine these views, modifying yours by mine, so as to afford useful, practical instruction. It has been said that, to live wisely, requires two lives—the first to gain experience ; the second to profit by it. There is no such absurdity in the dispensations of our Maker. The Brahmin may consider that *his* God so deals with him : not you and I. It is our privilege, the privilege of each of you, to live his allotted time in this world, with lights and helps, compared with which his own experience would be a blind guide and an ignorant teacher. If your lives are spared, you, in your turn, will occupy the position I hold ; when the future now

the subject of your solicitude, will be the past. It is certainly worthy of all pains for you to establish such principles and course for direction and conduct that, when this time comes, the retrospect shall be as fruitful of consolation as the prospect is blooming with hope.

A person preparing himself, or prepared with a liberal education, to enter the active scenes of life in this country, where our institutions, either of society or government, giving no preference to any individual or class, offer equal opportunities to all, casting every one upon his ability and resources, to make his way by the exertion of his own powers, by the force of his own character, allowing him the enjoyment of no confidence which he does not feel in himself, cannot avoid misgivings when he looks upon the throng before him already in possession of the ground. Every place seems full. The refinement of education, the feeling almost inseparable from the ability, affording just promise of success, aggravates mistrust. This condition of things led a worthy citizen of our country, when addressing a graduating college class a few years ago, to counsel to other pursuits than the liberal professions. I did not consider the counsel judicious, and I feel no disposition to give such advice; for I do not consider the thronged state of the field an argument that should weigh with any one against entering it with a resolute spirit of competition, prepared to form and carry out the determined purpose of rising to eminence and usefulness; in other words, eminence in usefulness; an eminence that all can attain, if they will bear up and persevere under the discouragements, make the sacrifices, and undergo the labour, which, with most men, must be the price of success—a price indeed, the full of which many will not pay, and therefore there are many failures.

But the crowded state of the active scenes of life, although most striking to an observer, is by no means the greatest discouragement you must meet. There is another class of far more intrinsic difficulty, to an ingenuous mind often perplexing and disheartening in the extreme. In our system equality is a pervading principle. You can place men in no relations in which, so far as the structure of society or government is concerned, one has superiority to another. Can you aspire to any office of honour or profit in the State or nation? So can all. Can you by your vote exert an influence that, directly or indirectly, exercises control over public measures? Who is there that cannot do the same as fully as you can? In our system, according to the elementary principles of its organization, every man is a component part, and every part is equal. These principles constitute the

excellency of our institutions—are, in fact, the animating breath of all civil and religious liberty, and the procreant source of all popular improvement and elevation, mental and moral.

This civil and social equality is producing sentiments of moral and intellectual equality, seen and felt in practical effects. The man who, by education, has disciplined and enriched his mind, and refined and elevated his morals, forming and furnishing himself by years of hard study for usefulness, can give to the public the benefit of his acquirements; there is need of them for carrying forward the business and enterprises of society, and strengthening and adorning it; it is for his and their mutual advantage, not for the present generation only but for generations to come, that he should impart, as called for in the course of things, the avails of his toils and expense—his prudence, knowledge, wisdom, integrity. You can understand this operation; it has been the familiar subject of your thoughts. But there is another operation. A man without education, with no discipline nor enrichment of mind, with no refinement nor elevation of morals, unformed and unfurnished for usefulness, may come before the public with crude thoughts and coarse displays of unwrought notions; and the man who by his cultivated powers would impart wisdom, and do good, and promote usefulness, may be set aside for one who meets the public mind on its own level, and ministers to it in its own taste, diffusing ignorance, and giving living power and extended action to depravity and folly. That depravity may be heightened and spread, that superficial opinions in popular guise may be the means of this, are lessons that have come down to us from ancient times, and have never ceased to be familiar; but we are solving the miserable problem, that ignorance may be taught. Instances abound. We have had specimens in SPEECHES, made under sacred auspices, and the commendatory presence of dignitaries of the land, greeted and cheered with deafening applause, in which, faithfully reported, not a sensible remark could be found, and the whole zest was from buffoonery ministering to low and vulgar appetite, to the disparagement of all that is noble in intellect, and the sacreligious debasement of all that is exalting in morals. These are specimens of one kind. The kinds are numerous, and in some form you must meet them and come in competition with them, in whatever you engage or wherever you go. They constitute the most disheartening of the discouragements that beset your way. The bare thought of such competition is revolting; but the certainty of meeting it, and the liableness to be foiled in it, and that because of the

best qualities education imparts—ability to communicate what is useful, and therefore in its nature requires attention and the exercise of thought, and conscientiousness against ministering to depraved appetite, sinking to buffoonery to gratify and cultivate the vile taste that relishes it—is adapted to weigh down the spirit and crush every worthy motive.

There may be added another cause of discouragement to educated men looking into the world, upon its active scenes with a view to enter them, (it is indeed involved in the preceding remarks,)—a general want of respect in the popular mind for education. This grows out of practice under our institutions. I have no party allusion; I simply notice the operation of our institutions. Every man may aspire to office; therefore, multitudes do aspire: but the majority have no peculiar qualification; the opinion of the majority is law; and it is, therefore, law, that no peculiar qualification is requisite for office. From the position, that no peculiar qualification is requisite for office, to the position, that no peculiar qualification is requisite for any thing, is but a step: and as education comes within the important peculiar qualification, there is a common disposition to undervalue, or even to disparage it. A man who has assiduously devoted his time and exerted his faculties, spending property, substituting toil and self-denial for ease and enjoyment, for some of the best years of his life, to qualify himself for usefulness—constrained to make his way through this prevailing disposition, cannot escape mortification. He must be prepared to be placed in rivalry with conceit and impudence, and to abide the superficial and prejudiced judgment of them whom he would serve.

Add to all this:—no small share of reputation in this world results from accident; a greater proportion is acquired through contrivances, which a man of worth cannot help spurning; and some is the offering of man-worship, the servile oblation of men, who being tools, rightly should be consigned to the department of mechanical agencies, but being noisy and sycophantic, by incessant trumpeting make impression upon the public ear, so as to produce substantial fame.

The present is said to be a time of revolution: it is so. Revolution may be, it has been the work of mind, in boldness and energy tearing from mystery its covering, astutely scrutinizing things most venerable and sacred; allowing nothing to receive the homage of man, which the judgment of man has not searched and approved. We are apt to deem this the essential character of all revolution. Applying it to the revolution of this time, we should be in entire error. This revolution

is the work of superficial thinking ; the result of activity for action's sake ; it proceeds from no investigation ; takes no time to consider ; it will go on unsettling, until its evils will call for a different class of mind to set up what it has overthrown.

In these views, I have exhibited to you some of the principal causes of discouragement which educated men must expect in the business or activities of life. They lie upon the surface of things ; and you see them in their most repulsive points. All are not destined to buffet them. Good luck has its part in this world, and acts it well. Favour helps ; accident is propitious. " 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.' " But mark it well—not in the affairs of all men. The greater number must labour at the oar or founder. While some are carried onward by the luck of accident, or the help of favour, or the tide of circumstances ; the greater number must make their way by their own powers, or there will be no way for them. Hence the great number of failures of educated men, setting out full of hope. Looking back to those who started with me, not one who had not as good prospects, and most of them far better than myself, more than one-half have failed. Years ago I counted those whom I had known educated to have an useful part in the world, as they occurred to my mind upon a little reflection : I numbered eighteen ; of these sixteen had failed ; the case of one was ambiguous ; one had, through good luck, succeeded. But here let it be distinctly understood, that I never knew a case of failure, where there might not have been complete success ; that experience and observation convince me, it is certain, every man can command success ; and in this connection let it be engraved upon your minds, that the success which is not commanded, is of very questionable value ; that what you should aspire to, as worthy of you, should be the achievement of your own powers, faithfully exerted, upon survey of the true duties and objects of life. Upon such a survey, any one thoroughly examining, will be stimulated rather than deterred by difficulties ; for through the whole of them he may have for his cheering guide, the maxim, "**USEFUL DILIGENCE WILL AT LAST PREVAIL.**"

One of the greatest perils of young men of education entering upon life, it may be termed, "*the Maelstrom*" of educated youth, is taking too short and contracted a view. A man setting out upon an enterprise to explore the north-west passage, having made no more calculation respecting health and strength ; taken no more thought for fixing his mind in steadfastness of resolution, and used no more care to

settle his objects, his measures and matters of preparation, than if he were upon a day's excursion to Philadelphia, would be deemed idiotic or insane. You would be certain he would stop short of the north-west passage. Yet this practical absurdity marks the entrance of most educated men upon life. The inquiry will be, what can I expect in three months, six months, a year? The last would be deemed an arms-length calculation. The inquiry should respect a lifetime: what can I expect in thirty or forty years? The question with me, said one, is not, what I am to be at twenty-five, but how shall I stand at forty; when time, my own application, the natural and cultivated growth of my powers, and the experience and observation of the world about me, have had opportunity to do their proper offices. It is manifest, that this person, and he who looks to the end of the first year for the fruits of life, will vary in temper, feeling, and conduct, at every step: the actual difference will be far greater than the supposition. With no other cause of difference in the issues, it is apparent upon reflection, the first person may stand at forty in full possession of all his objects, while the last at the end of his year may be so broken down in resolution, that no valuable attainment can be expected from him.

There are qualifications for success, qualifications in the majority of cases essential to success, which lie entirely out of sight. ALL understand there must be intellectual preparation: the mind must be disciplined and furnished through study: and to afford solid ground of confidence, this study must be long and severe. Under this understanding time is devoted, labour undergone, as matter of course. Even in this particular, it is by no means generally understood, that when a man enters upon a liberal profession, he is at the commencement of his studies; that what he has done, is preparation to labour to advantage, not the accomplishment of the object. Nor is it considered, as it should be, that what we call talent or genius, is much more the production of labour, than a natural endowment. The mind, under a system of judicious and severe tasking, unfolds itself with growing increase of its faculties, and skill to use them, so as to have power and ability to bring that power into full and effectual operation.

But the most difficult and important qualifications for success, lie still more out of sight. One of these is patience; patience of endurance and application. Of the failures I have known, (and bear in mind a majority of cases have been failures,) more have been owing to want of patience than any other cause. Another qualification akin

to this, is a settled frame of mind to be content to do what you can do. There is a strong propensity in educated young men to look over what is directly before them and immediately concerns them, to something ahead, painted by the imagination, the picture of which makes their present condition, and all connected with it, appear small and course, and not worth their attention. One of as good mind and finished education as I have ever known, upon setting out in his profession, indulged the thought, that he could as reasonably calculate upon being president of the United States, as could the president then in office at the same time in life; and this contemplation so dwarfed every thing that presented itself to him, that in disgust he sought relief in intemperance, and died of mania potu. Another very material qualification for success, is that strength and elasticity of spirit, which, constant to its purpose and confident of the worthiness and attainableness of its aims, under any discouragement, "bates not a jot of heart or hope, but still bears up and steers right onward." Many are ruined, because they cannot endure mortification; it dries up the spring of motive; kills at the root the power of resolution; every thing is abandoned to despair. Another very material qualification for success, is unsleeping watchfulness and uncompromising determination against treating any one ill, and against exposing yourself to be ill-treated. Ill-treatment should never be returned; this is a principle from which, firmly established, proceed most salutary influences, and through which evils of most malignant cast are precluded. You may bear a quarrel, "that the opposer may beware of thee;" you may inflict injury, or cover him with shame: if a duellist, you may kill him, but rest assured, the greatest harm will be done to yourself: harm, which may be fatal to your success in life, which must be baneful in its consequences;—if appearances would lead to a different conclusion in some cases, these cases are few of many, and the appearances generally deceitful. Considering human nature, the only safe way in this particular, is habitual wariness and circumspection to avoid all occasions and causes of ill-treatment. This can be done. The politest gentleman within my knowledge, with whom no one can associate without being won by the agreeableness of his manners, has acquired those manners, so that they are indeed second nature, by careful self-government; being led to it by a consciousness of his own natural temper, and witnessing the distress in which indulgence of similar temper had involved acquaintances. This enumeration might be extended; nor would the remarks be liable to the objection of being common-

place; for under the certainty, that of those who ought to exert the most salutary influences, and contribute most to build up society, the majority signally fail, it is worth minute study to investigate the cause, and guard against the effect. I will, however, add only one more qualification—sound integrity; exemplified in truth never deviating, uprightness never inclining, purity never sullied at any time, in any instance, on any emergency. This is not only demanded for the sake of success, without it success is worth nothing. It was a most significant question in reference to an eminent man whose talents and acquirements were insisted upon, “What is a man with a soiled character?” If it be suggested, that the standard prescribed is high, therefore, within the reach of few, and as a consequence some may be justified in not attempting it—I reply, a high standard is much easier of attainment than a medium one. If the standard be high, the resolution required to fix upon it, produces a frame of mind, that cannot rest below it, and inspires the energy that rises to it; while a medium standard, by its facility, countenances the natural disposition to slothfulness and indulgence, and thus defeats even its own purpose.

It is, however, my design in these observations, not to prescribe rules of moral conduct, but to press upon your attention the connection between moral excellency and success in life; the control that moral excellency exercises over this success; the vital element that moral excellency is in that force of character which commands life, its incidents and relations, and is the graduating power of the influence and respectability which each individual is to have in society; and the strange fact, that it rarely happens, any one in marking out his plan of life, makes a distinct place, appropriates stated hours, or selects special means for cultivating his moral principles. Method, you are aware, is indispensable to judicious and effectual action. He who would live to purpose, must have a plan of life before him, deliberately formed, to be pursued with diligence and constancy. We cannot live at random and accomplish any thing difficult or valuable. To make my meaning plain, I will suppose one of you will choose the legal profession. He means to succeed; and in the spirit of laudable ambition, he will task himself unsparingly to fulfil his own hopes, and the fond expectations of his relatives and friends. He will apply himself sedulously, by study, to enrich his mind with legal science; to amplify his command of language; to invigorate and improve his intellectual faculties; to accomplish himself to be a judicious counsellor and a persuasive advocate: but will he set apart any stated time, or

settle on any course, or employ any specific means to imbue his mind more thoroughly with integrity, and resoluteness, and kindness, and patience, and forbearance, and fortitude to bear up under mortification and discouragement, without repining or sinking? With respect to the first, *intellectual culture*, he will feel his need, see his way, and proceed without hesitation. With respect to the last, *moral culture*, he will not readily admit there is need; he will not be easily convinced there is any way; he will be very apt to overlook the matter entirely; or, if it be forced upon his notice, treat it as chimerical. And why? Does any one doubt, that our moral nature is improveable, or needs improvement? Certainly as much, probably more than our intellectual. Upon the abstract philosophy of this point, no one will raise a question; but we are not familiar with practice. It is palpable to observation, that *intellectual culture* increases power, imparts efficiency for success; but it is not so obvious, that moral character is an element of personal power, materially enhancing its degree and effectiveness. A strong illustration of this point has been presented to me while writing these remarks.

In the course of my education I had knowledge of one in like course, whose uniform refinement and correctness, manifestly proceeding from constant care and pains-taking, made a lasting impression upon my mind. In talent and scholarship, he was not above mediocrity. He entered the legal profession in a long settled part of our country, in an old town, in competition with a full bar—country and town abounding with established, eminent lawyers. A few weeks ago, for the first time, I had opportunity of particular inquiry concerning him. I learned he had attained the first rank in his profession; before a jury he had no equal; before a court no superior. To my expression of surprise, the reply was given—"he is a man of such candour." When young, I learned from eye-witnesses the following facts. There were, in a part of this country, two men starting together in the same line of life—one in mind and body not inferior to any man in the nation, powerful and brilliant, graceful and accomplished, admired and loved by all; the other dull, heavy, plodding, but patient and persevering. The first had his day of corruscation; his path a ray of light, but vanishing like the meteor's; his setting out was too prosperous to admit the acquiring of patience, of firmness or fortitude; his short life terminated in sorrow. The last laboured along, proceeding by slow but steady steps, gradually rose to wealth and honour, was useful and influential, and living to a good age,

left by his death a vacancy in the community by all lamented and regretted. In these illustrations it is very plain, that the moral attributes of the individuals had more efficiency than their intellectual, in framing the events of their lives. With respect to the three—of the first and last, their moral character, by the application resulting from it, directly improved their intellectual powers, while indirectly, by its elevating and purifying effects, it invested them with an influence which no intellectual training could impart. Of the other, it is certain, that defect of moral attributes, in despite of highest intellectual qualifications and most propitious circumstances, made the issue of his life an utter ruin. We might adduce the character of Washington—“first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen”—and by a just analysis show conclusively, that its surpassing power emanated from its moral qualities. The anecdotes which you read or hear of Washington, illustrating his character, almost invariably exhibit moral features. If then moral excellency confers such advantage; if its influence upon life be, to make success certain; if without it there is imminent hazard, a majority of cases entering upon life proving failures, and that through defect of moral qualities,—we recur to our previous intimation and inquire how it happens, that men entering upon life, and settling their plan, make no stated time, mark no course, and select no specific means for moral improvement. For intellectual improvement, the studies to be pursued and the course of application are settled. You would have no hope of a man if it were not so. But upon the view here taken, moral excellency conduces to intellectual improvement, enhances the value of it, makes advantages for the use of it; and without this excellency, intellectual power, however great, is no sure dependence. Certainly then a man determined on elevation and advancement, and willing to use the means, whatever labour or pains they may require, ought to make the improvement of his moral character as fixed and certain an object as that of his intellectual. That there is great neglect, almost total heedlessness in this respect, is certain; there must be injurious consequences. This sometimes becomes painfully manifest, but it passes by in the current of the day without directing attention to the source of the evil, or to a remedy for it. We can make no estimate of the extent of the mischief, but we can make personal application of the argument. We can approach the educated young men of our country, and in unison with the earnest solitudes of each individual, urge the entreaty—will not you introduce into your plan of life the new measure

of moral, in addition to that of intellectual culture? Bear in mind, that our country is in infancy, the principles and structure of our government new, the organization and laws of society, the civil and social relations of men, new; we need, and we must have, rules and principles of conduct, uncalled for in other countries, and of which we have not perceived the use, because we have been educated in the learning and opinions of those countries, and have scarcely begun to act upon the peculiar principles, and in accordance with the spirit of our own institutions. In no country are men thrown so entirely upon their own resources; on the one hand without hinderance, on the other without help. On the one hand they can depend upon nothing but their own power for their advancement; and on the other they can avail themselves of all the power they have, without restriction or impediment. The advancement of each individual, as matter of sure calculation, (for I am excluding good luck, fraudulent contrivance, and all indirection and casualty,) I say, the advancement of each individual must be according to the power he can exert; of course he should avail himself of every legitimate means of power, and of moral improvement as one of the most efficacious.

Upon this point there are inveterate prejudices, having no ground in the nature of things, but deeply rooted in the minds of men. It is one of these, that moral improvement is one of the effects of intellectual culture, and that there is no other method suited to men generally, (that is, of all classes and callings,) of promoting it. The celebrated letters of Junius end with this paragraph: "Grateful as I am to the GOOD BEING whose bounty has imparted to me this reasoning intellect, whatever it is, I hold myself proportionably indebted to him, from whose enlightened understanding another ray of knowledge communicates to mine. But neither should I think the most exalted faculties of the human mind, a gift worthy of divinity, nor any assistance in the improvement of them a subject of gratitude to my fellow creature, if I were not satisfied that really to inform the understanding, corrects and enlarges the heart." This is an elegant expression of the common opinion. If we will admit that facts are stubborn things, we need no more conclusive proof of the fallacy of this opinion than the case in hand makes; for Belsham, a partisan of the same political school as Junius, says of him, that "he stands recorded to all future times a liar, an assassin, and a coward." No one will deny that the mind of the writer of these letters, was well cultivated and richly endued. So that our author, while he affords us the best-drawn dic-

tum of the opinion, by his own moral character evinces its falsehood. Facts of the same import, are not rare. Many years ago, my attention was directed to a prominent individual, who was both an accomplished proficient in elegant literature, and an abandoned profligate.

Perhaps I ought to be more explicit with respect to the phrase, "moral excellency;" what I would convey by it. There is ground to apprehend harm from the common use of this term in too restricted sense. On this account it may be useful to say that, by moral excellency, I do not mean any single moral attribute, nor especially any fact moral in its nature, which may be no property of character. In my view morality pervades the character, and produces symmetry. Malice, impertinence, presumption, are as inconsistent with it as intemperance or dissoluteness. One moral quality draws to itself others, and it is repulsive of whatever is uncongenial. Moral excellency, besides integrity, truth, candour, just regard to the rights of others, and proper moderation of our own claims, implies self-command, considerateness of conduct, a frame of mind conformed to our condition, content to do what is in our way and within our ability, in order to make progress, patience and constancy of endurance and application, not faltering under discouragement, nor made restless by resistance, but awaiting time and opportunity to accomplish our objects. There is no soundness in the supposition that mere intellectual culture is a means of moral improvement; but it is true, in the fullest sense, that moral culture promotes intellectual improvement, indeed self-improvement in every form. It invigorates the mind; it husbands time; it fosters industry; it imparts that invincible energy naturally inspired by motives felt to be pure and exalted, which looking to a worthy purpose, will not stop short of it. If you should search the nation, inquiring of all qualified to speak from experience, the testimony would be unanimous, that the culture of a high moral sense was the best qualification of man for power; that, in no other way, would equal care and pains so expand and strengthen the mind.

The other prejudices to which I have alluded, assumes, that moral principle is natural production and growth; that if a man is naturally base, he will continue so; that if he is naturally fickle, no process will make him steadfast; that if naturally he has a noble spirit, he will always be distinguished by that trait of character. Whoever will thoroughly investigate this point, will find that this prejudice, although without even colour from truth, pervades every mind. When we take time and care to examine and deliberate, we see that it must be ground-

less ; and yet, if called upon the next moment to act in a matter giving place for it, we should probably proceed under its influence.

The life of the illustrious English statesman, Charles James Fox, affords an instructive illustration of several points of this important subject. You are aware that he was a younger son of a noble family. His elder brother would inherit the coronet. He seems to have been educated with the purpose to indue him with power to raise himself to equal honour. His connexions could place him in the House of Commons, the vantage ground from which superior ability would elevate him to distinguished station. Intellectually, the purpose of his education was fully accomplished. As a statesman he had no superior. In the House of Commons with Pitt and Burke, he had no equal as a debater. His speeches in sound practical sense, justness of views, lucidness, and fullness of knowledge of the constitution, political economy, national relations, and true interests of his country, excel all others of his time. Yet he never possessed any real power ; he effected nothing. It is true that, on two occasions, he had a place in the ministry, but on both his time was short. With the first he was loaded with reproaches, not escaping those of warm friends ; and with the last he poured out the dregs of an exhausted life. He was the idol of a party, but his being so, consigned it to insignificance. During the long, long administration of the younger Pitt, he led the opposition ; but this administration, although profuse to extravagance of national treasure, accumulating alarmingly the national debt, signally failing in every measure, urging wars conducted at immense expense to England, and eventuating, without an exception, in building up and consolidating the power of her enemy ; indeed, so unfortunate that Mr. Pitt, in the height of power, died of the unvarying and distressful miscarriage of his plans, never wavered before this opposition. In this view the consideration presses upon us—as it is the principle of the British Constitution that, when the measures of administration prove unwise, the opposition triumphs and applies the corrective, how could it happen, that Mr. Pitt's administration stood for such an unparalleled length of time with such unshaken firmness ? This circumstance was not the mishap of a few years, nor the misfortune of a generation ; it is a calamity to mankind, of which no one can see the end. It incorporated in the vitals of the British nation a system of taxation, which carries distress into the lives of more than two-thirds of the population, and bears very injuriously upon the interests of every nation connected with English commerce. Events allow no doubt of

the disastrous character of that administration ; and Mr. Fox by his parliamentary speeches portrayed it as plainly while the measures were in progress, as it is now seen in their issues. The question recurs, why then was that opposition entirely unfelt, doomed to imbecile minority ? We believe for the same reason, that Mr. Fox notwithstanding his commanding intellectual ability, never possessed personal power—was unfelt in his efforts:—it is to be found in his moral character. Multitudes followed him with huzzas ; but these were empty breath ; noise and no more : the majority of the British nation never would espouse a party whose leader was the companion of gamblers and profligates ; they shrunk from the contact.

It is fair reasoning, that moral excellency in the character of Fox would have made him the most powerful and useful individual of his time : it is a fact, that immorality deprived him of all substantial power and despoiled of their proper strength the party which dazzled with his talents but weakened through his association, instead of checking the administration they opposed, made it more stable. It is just to apply the principles of this case to every individual in every sphere of life. It holds true of every one, in whatever sphere, that moral excellency will be an important element of power for success and advancement ; and that not only positive in morality, but negative deficiency of moral worth will be sure to be felt either in wholly defeating the object of life, or in lessening and degrading its attainments.

But the matter of special instruction in this case presents itself upon the inquiry, How did it happen that the moral character of Fox so run to waste ? The prejudices which I have noticed, will give a ready, but superficial and false answer to this question. We should search more deeply. What pains must have been taken with Mr. Fox, what labour must he have undergone, to make him intellectually what he was—in classical scholarship the equal of his master, the celebrated Dr. Parr ; accomplished in the various knowledge of the polity, and complicated and extensive interests and relations of the British nation, which could be acquired only by long and toilsome drudgery ! There was bestowed upon him unsparing care ; and on his part there must have been resolute self-denial, and patient endurance of labour.—All this was to make him great, to raise him to eminence through the energy of his own powers. If it had been supposed, that moral excellence was an essential part of this process, a means of power, would there not have been care and pains for that ? and would it not have been attained ? Much less self-denial, care and labour, than was expended

upon his intellectual culture, would have made his moral character as elevated as his intellectual was commanding. It was because no such care and pains as were taken and such self-denial and labour as were undergone for his intellectual culture, were directed to his moral improvement, that the object of his life was lost. Reasoning from this case to that of every individual, and this is just reasoning, the position that has been taken is sustained, that it ought to be a part of every one's plan of life to use special means to promote his moral improvement.

This brings the question, What are these means? a question at once interesting and perplexing. Suppose the plan formed—a portion of every day set apart to be diligently used for moral improvement: what is to be done? To prepare for intelligently answering this question, we will advert to something more familiar, the principles of which coming within more common observation, we can more readily understand. A law student was advised to pursue mathematical and classical studies, appropriating two hours of every week day to this purpose. This advice was not given upon any supposition, that in the practice of law there would be occasion for the application of mathematical problems, or the use of Latin or Greek. The ground of the advice was, that in mathematics you must reason with exactness and certainty, your conclusions must be demonstration, you must arrive at precise truth. By this study the mind acquires the property through which it reasons closely, investigates thoroughly and cannot rest in looseness and fallacy. The study of the classics exercises memory, discrimination and judgment;—conversant with thought, it imparts the productive power of thought; conversant with language, it confers the command of language both for force and copiousness of expression. In these respects, the unfolding and forming of the mind, is nearly equal in effect to the creation of new faculties. Pursuing the analogy, moral improvement must proceed from communion of mind with sentiments and truths of sound and elevating principle, producing homogeneity, so that like sentiments and truths are the fruit of its own operations: moral excellency consisting, not in following certain positive rules in violation of our feelings and inclination, although all improvement intellectual and moral generally begins in this way, but in the temperament and propensities brought into conformity to just sentiments and truths through the spirit of these sentiments pervading with sympathy and transmuting effect our spirits, and these truths rooting themselves in our mental constitution as first principles. In

this way motives and purposes are elevated, thinking, feeling, and judgment become as tenacious of right and repulsive of wrong, as the principles and spirit of the sentiments and truths which have been studied and imbibed. Is it suggested that this view is chimerical, and that men have no such capacity of moral improvement? Why, the justness and practicalness of it are proved by familiar observation. Who does not see, that association produce their kindred moral character?—those brought up in dirt, love dirt; those brought up in cleanliness, are cleanly. It is a common proverb as well as inspired truth, “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” It is inspired instruction, “Let no evil communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying;” that is, producing its like—good. And why not? Why not the mind formed to pureness and elevation by the study of pure and exalting sentiments and truths, as well as to closeness of reasoning and exactness of judgment by the study of mathematics? But who has tried the course here prescribed, and failed? Here lies the difficulty. Men will not take the pains with their moral training which they do with their intellectual, and they slide into the conclusion, that no pains are necessary, or there is nothing practical. Hence the difficulty of maintaining the plainest positions.

You who are about leaving this institution, or are in your course of education, have enjoyed great advantages: you are bound to consider yourselves highly favoured, and to pay back to society by your usefulness, the benefits you have received. You can make yourselves any thing; but whatever you are to be, you must make yourselves. The great work to be influential and useful, to requite the kindness of which you have been the subjects, and to gratify your own laudable aspirations, for every one should aspire to worth and respectability;—this great work you must do for yourselves: no one else can do it for you. It was said to a king, there is no royal way to become a mathematician: in this country you know, we have no royal way at all—to be or do anything. Superiority, the end: hard work, strenuous effort put forth with judgment and energy, the means. We wish to each one of you as ardently as you can desire, full success. It is because of this desire, I urge upon you the consideration, that you can not hope for any thing worthy of you, but by training your powers to the fullness of their capacity, and exerting them to the utmost of their strength. The true value of an acquisition, is what it costs us. In this view the discouragements, mortifications and difficulties in your

way, are real benefits: they are so intended in the all-wise arrangements of Providence. Virtue is the offspring of trial—of mortifications, discouragements and difficulties borne as they should be borne, and overcome as they ought to be overcome. I recur then to the question, What are the means that should be used for moral improvement? Here prejudice will be busy with the answer I give, and I feel the need of bespeaking candour and indulgence to hear me in exposition of my reasons, when I announce the study of the Bible, attributing to it its character of a revelation from God for the instruction of man, understanding it in the plainness of its meaning, and applying it to ourselves in its manifest sense and bearing, as the only efficacious means of attaining to moral excellency.

The objection at once arises, You mean that we must begin life with religion. This is not my meaning; and I desire to remove this mistake, because I know what will be its consequence. You will suggest, If we were professors of religion we would ponder your advice; and when we become so, we will take it into consideration. Let me preclude this suggestion. My meaning is candidly and simply, that for the attainment of moral excellency, the study of the Bible, as I have presented it to you, is the only efficient means: that this study should be pursued by every one who wishes to have this essential element of power for his success and advancement in life by his own energies; that without any reference to religion for *moral culture* the Bible should be studied with the same deference, and purpose to have your mind instructed, formed and improved in its moral faculties, as you study your classics for its improvement in its intellectual faculties.

We assert the study of the Bible to be the only efficient means of moral culture. Junius was a moral philosopher; we have cited from Belsham a very just account of his moral character. Cicero was a moral philosopher of highest grade. He says in one of his excellent treatises, "To yield to misfortunes or bear them weakly, is miserable. By such infirmity of mind many have brought ruin upon their relations and friends, some even on their country, but more upon themselves." We cannot suppose, that Cicero by his philosophy could make men better, than he the author of that philosophy was. Now if we search history for the strongest case of infirmity in yielding to misfortunes and bearing them weakly, we shall find it in Cicero himself quailing in pitiable fear and weakness before a worthless demagogue. The injury which by this infirmity he did to his relations and friends, to his country, but more to himself, strikingly illus-

trates his own lesson. The celebrated Bacon was the greatest moral philosopher of his time : and he was a bribed chancellor, a dastardly, merciless and violent persecutor of great men fallen under royal displeasure, a mean truckler to tyrannical power, a sycophant of a silly, vain and arbitrary king. The inefficacy of moral philosophy is readily accounted for. When right and wrong are made the subject of curious investigation, no small matter has been effected for blinding conscience. On the subject of morals theory is dangerous. It is so easy to make rules, and we make so many which experience forewarns us we shall break, that we insensibly slide into the total neglect of practice, and life becomes a mere matter of rule and profession. Moral excellence requires a vital principle of action, always producing its proper effect, by entering into the inception of motive and giving it form, direction and energy. The best illustration we have is the instance of a man solicited to do a wrong strongly tempting, and by its nature insuring concealment, shrinking back with the exclamation, "how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" This is influence by its inherent efficacy effecting its full purpose. There is no arguing to a conclusion ; but there is recoiling through abhorrence from wickedness as degrading to man and provoking to God. This is moral excellence : the sentiments and truths of the Bible are adapted to produce it : the candid and faithful study of the Bible conducts to it : this study should therefore be pursued by every one with a view to the elevation of his moral nature.

All profess veneration for the Bible ; but it is a veneration that lays it upon the shelf as too sacred for the common uses of this life, but peculiar and appropriate to a future state ; a revelation respecting another world, not bearing upon the concerns and exigencies of this :—a book to teach us how to die, whenever we may choose to learn the lesson, not how to live ; to be preached from and therefore proper for ministers ; not to be acted by, and therefore the requisite manual for every one. I know nothing so much to be desired for elevating the whole body of society, the common standard of mind, to the high grade required by American citizenship, as to take the Bible from this place in general estimation, and removing prejudices introduce it to the affections of all, especially the young, as a kind teacher and guide, provided through love with a perfect knowledge of their necessities and a direct view to them, to exalt them by noble and purifying sentiments, enlighten them with the most important of all knowledge, and lead them in ways of pleasantness to worth and honour.

There are most solid grounds for maintaining, that the Bible and that only, is an adequate means of moral improvement. One is the certainty: its instructions emanate from perfect knowledge, wisdom and truth: its requirements are absolute duty. It allows no doubt, what *is* moral excellence; the only question is, will you have it. A disputed position cannot be an efficacious principle. But upon moral positions men, learned and unlearned, disagree. With respect to harbouring resentment, through which and by indulging the passions it makes place for, men plant their paths with thorns, and impede their prosperity, while the opposite temper which upon eradicating this will prevail, is of inestimable value, what is the doctrine of men? The graphic page of Tacitus presents for abhorrence "*odia in longum jaciens, quæ reconderet, auctaque promeret;*" but dressed in Byron's poetry,

— "If we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power,
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search, and vigil long,
Of him who treasures up a wrong;"

the same trait is applauded and coveted. Who shall decide? The natural feelings are with Byron. Homer is true to nature: implacable wrath distinguishes his hero. Governor Oglethorp of Georgia, a superior man, more than one hundred years ago emphatically announced it as his own approved disposition, "I never forgive." A late eminent citizen of our country gloried in the same declaration, "I never forgive." I once heard a gentleman much esteemed speaking of a duty to suppress enmity toward a fellow-being seeking reconciliation, and greet him as a friend, declare, that it was the hardest requirement to which he ever consented. So that upon the opinions of men we can have no principle in this important matter. But the Bible gives rule and reason so explicitly and positively, that if we do not reject its authority, we cannot avoid a peremptory decision. "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." I am aware, this quotation seems out of place in an address intended not to have a religious character; and that persons not professing religion, on that ground, will

consider themselves not within its scope.—Why not? Is it not a plain, moral precept important to every man who has intercourse with men, directory of feeling and disposition in circumstances daily occurring, in which its observance or neglect may deeply implicate character and prosperity? The consequences never can be without weight; they may be momentous. Men disagree about the principle of conduct: thus a moral question is presented which every one is deeply concerned to solve truly. You can find the solution of the Bible nowhere else. This quotation, then, is not out of place in an address urging the culture of moral principle; but the matter for surprise is, that any one holding the Bible as the word of God, can fail to regard the passage as expressing an immutable principle of moral obligation and containing an universal moral injunction. We have no alternative, but to receive and carry out the precept, or reject the relation (children of your Father which is in heaven,) and defy the authority.

Another ground of the Bible alone being adequate means of moral improvement is the foundation and sanction of its position. What is the foundation, what the sanction of morality regulated by the opinions of men? Our own judgment and will liable at any moment to be perverted by feeling or passion regulated by fancy. To give a specimen: Lately in another country a young officer in the army conceiving himself treated with indignity by a superior officer who was husband of his near relative and by her father of two little children, wife and children dependent upon this husband and father for bread, challenged him, would consent to no terms of conciliation, and killed him in a duel. Here was a clear moral obligation according to the opinions of men upon this young officer to protect that helpless female and her babes: his relationship to her according to the opinions of men enhanced this obligation. He acted upon feeling regulated by fancy, deprived her of all earthly support, and for a single gratification of malice, consigned her and her orphans to distress and ruin. A savage would have been more kind. Yet this man would have deemed it a wanton injury, to impeach his morality. Such is morality regulated by the opinions of men. To constitute moral excellence, moral principle must have strength to control passion and feeling, and guide reasoning and judgment: short of this, it is empty breath.

The principle and sanction of morality derived from the Bible, are in the truths, that we are immortal, endued with an existence, that will not, that cannot end; that by our course in this life we shall form our

character and make our condition for eternity ; that it is our privilege to be like God here and hereafter ; to adopt for our conduct the principle on which he acts and by adopting it assimilate ourselves to him : while by rejecting it we open the way to the full working of depravity, and fit ourselves to be gathered in everlasting companionship with all that is filthy, an outcast from purity and peace. This principle and sanction is further unfolded in the truths, that this world is under the dominion not of chance but Providence ; that what we term Providence, is the government of God exercised with unsleeping vigilance, infinite knowledge and wisdom, and almighty power ; that we are the subjects of this government having a part in it involving glorious destinies and tremendous responsibilities ; and that every step which we take is connected with these destinies and responsibilities. Is not this powerful truth ?—Does the question start up, Is it truth ?—Why no one doubts it, but an atheist. It lies upon the whole surface of our being ; we can look to no part without seeing it. It is truth : we ought to see it in its fulness, and rise to its high requirements. We have before in these remarks adverted to the hinderance to young men setting out in life, from too contracted views ; intimating the great superiority of him whose inquiry is, what shall I be twenty years hence, over him who asks, what he can be in a year. But the view we proposed was too short : the inquiry of an immortal spirit should be, what shall I be in eternity !—This too, let it be understood is morality :—we use this term in a sense that betrays us. All feel indispensable obligation to be moral. No one will consent to the stain of immorality.—But let it be distinctly understood, the morality of an immortal being is incident to immortality, takes hold of eternity.

One of the greatest impediments to our efficaciously urging to the attainment of high moral standing, arises from the supposed religious bearing of our arguments. A gentleman has used this language, “I cannot be religious, it would be hypocrisy ;” but he would have generously aspired to exalted moral worth. Any observation that could have been made to him, would have been thrown away unheeded, if suspected of direction to religion ; while he would have carefully pondered any thing believed efficacious for moral improvement. On this account I am solicitous to have what is the truth of my present remarks distinctly borne in mind, that they are entirely of a moral character and designed purely for moral effect. The principles are such, as every one who will have the strong, vigorous stamina of moral character, must imbibe, and the grounds taken are the only grounds

productive of these principles. It will not do to reject from our morality, God, his government, and our relation to it, our immortality and eternal state. If we will rise to the elevation of our being, and adorn ourselves with its appropriate embellishments, we must contemplate its essential attributes, of everlasting duration and capacity for ever to brighten through inherent lustre, for ever to rise through inherent vigour, and to hold communion with infinite intelligence, wisdom and purity by having for our influence and aim the motives and objects, which revelation teaches, are deemed worthy of that purity, wisdom and intelligence. Such contemplations are fit food for the spirit that dwells within us : to neglect or slight them, is to discard the spirit of man that goeth upward, and adopt and foster "the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth."

I recur to the position, that morality is the effect of truth and sentiment upon the mind : of course it is according to the purity, elevation and power of the truth and sentiment brought to operate upon the mind by attention and meditation. The food supplied to the body, does not more directly act upon it and assimilate with it, circulating throughout that which refreshes and invigorates, producing health and growth, or that which taints and enervates, producing debility and disease ; than the matter ministered to the mind, affecting it according to its qualities, imbuing it with its own properties. The Bible is by no means thoroughly examined or candidly judged. The impression of any person who is a lawyer, physician, statesman, farmer, merchant, manufacturer, is, that it has no special aptitude to qualify him for his line of life ; and without further thought he lets it lie respected, but untouched ; or if his profession do not allow him so far to neglect it, he uses it for a purpose which he deems religious, having no direct connection with the practical part of life. He will admit, that every one should improve his mind, both morally and intellectually : but has the thought ever occurred to him, that for these objects the Bible is a proper manual ; or that every one should assign to it a substantial portion of every day ?

To prove by examination and comparison that the sentiments, truths, and language of the Bible, as means of moral culture and improvement, are greatly superior to what can be found in the best authors, I will quote a few passages from the Bible in connection with most approved passages from these authors ; and I ask, that judgment

be formed, without religious reference, upon the principles of just criticism and common sense.

I will quote from Scott one of the finest passages of his most beautiful poem, the *Lady of the Lake* :—

“They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
They say, my brain is warped and wrung :
I cannot sleep on highland brae,
I cannot pray in highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devon’s tides,
So sweetly would I rest and pray ;
’That heaven would close my wintry day.
’Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
They bade me to the church repair,
It was my bridal morn, they said,
And my true love would meet me there :
But wo betide the cruel guile
’That drowned in blood the morning smile.”

There is no doubt poetry in this extract, beautiful poetry ; but it is a trifle : and much precious time is consumed, and more precious mind runs to waste, luxuriating upon such beautiful trifles.

I put in comparison a passage from the 137th Psalm :

“By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down : yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.—How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land ! If I forget thee, O Jerusalem ! let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

In this extract, the language is certainly of equal beauty, of far greater intensity, and the sentiment, *fixedness of purpose*, rises before the mind and enters it as a thing of life.

Johnson says, “the stream of time which is continually washing the dissoluble fabric of other poets, passes without injury by the adamant of Shakspeare.” I will make an extract from him ; and if it is a very common, be pleased to recollect that this circumstance proves it to be a superior passage.

“And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself ;
Yea, all that it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like an unsubstantial pageant, faded,
Leave not a wreck behind : We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.”

I will quote two passages from the Bible. The first from Revelations, vi.

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind: And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places: And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The other passage from Peter's Second Epistle, iii.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

I mistake greatly, if Shakspeare in this comparison be not tame. You see in the passage from him, the conclusion is a lame falling away, because he lacked matter of application; in the passages from the Bible, the application "who shall be able to stand," "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness," is as pungent and intense, as the representation is sublime and heart-stirring. Indeed how can we avoid making the application in looking with steadfast eye to this event which is in the direct line of our being, and in which we must stand and have our part.

Good taste has placed the following among the beauties of Shakspeare:—

—————"The great king of kings
Hath in the table of his law commanded,
That thou shalt do no murder.
Take heed; for he holds vengeance in his hands,
To hurl upon their heads, who break his law."

Compare this passage from Deut. xxxii.

"To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste."

Another passage from Shakspeare:

"I have touched the highest point of all my greatness,
And from the full meridian of my glory,

I haste now to my setting. I shall fall
Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man see me more."

Job xx. "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds; yet he shall perish forever." * * * "He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him." * * * "All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle. The heavens shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him." * * * "This is the portion of the wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God."

Among the beauties of Shakspeare, we have the passage—

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures."

How much better the instruction of the Bible.

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." * * * "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." * * * "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid upon thee, because he trusteth in thee." * * * "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

There is a very fine passage in Pope's Homer—

"Fixed is the term to all the race of earth,
And such the hard condition of our birth,
No force can then resist, no flight can save:
All sink alike, the fearful and the brave.
My early youth was bred to martial pains;
My soul impels me to embattled plains:
Let me be foremost to defend the throne,
To guard my father's glories and my own.
Yet come it will; the day decreed by fates,
(How my heart trembles, while my tongue relates;)
The day when thou imperial Troy must bend,
Must see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
And yet no dire presage so wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind,
Not Priam's hoary hair defiled with gore,
Not all my brothers gasping on the shore;
As thine Andromache: thy griefs I dread;
I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led!
May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
Pressed with a load of monumental clay!
Thy Hector wrapt in everlasting sleep,
Shall neither hear thee sigh nor see thee weep."

It is vain to say, that such pictures do not produce effect upon mental temperament: they make channels in the mind in which thinking and reasoning move, and conclusions are formed—constituting a motive agency. Let us under this view compare this extract from Isa. liv.

“For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee, shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”

This is an admired passage of Shakspeare—

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts, and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.”

And is this a picture of life, invested with the responsibilities of eternity, that has, in its solemn destiny, the fixing of eternity in heaven or hell! Compare the following passage, Psalm xc.

“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is passed, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth. For we are consumed in thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.” * * * “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. O satisfy us *early* with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad *all* our days.”

Ossian was Bonaparte's favourite poet. Whether his poems were

originals or translations, matters nothing for our present purpose. The following is one of his finest passages.

“O, thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O sun! whence thy everlasting light! Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty, and the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon cold and pale sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone: who can be companion of thy course! The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again: the moon herself is lost in heaven; but thou art forever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests: when thunder rolls and lightning flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou lookest in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more, whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. But thou art perhaps like me for a season; and thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in thy clouds careless of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O sun! in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark, and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills: the blast of the north is on the plain; the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey.”

We place in comparison Psalm xxiii.

“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the midst of my enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Cræsus, the richest of kings, who in the splendour of his prosperity felt slighted by Solon’s supposing there was a happier man on earth, being conquered, and placed, under sentence of death, upon his funeral pile, had brought vividly to his memory these remarks of the philosopher—

“The life of man consists of seventy years, which make 26,250 days: an immense number; yet in the longest life the events of any one day will not be found exactly alike to those of another. The affairs of men are liable to perpetual vicissitudes; the divinity who presides over our fate, is envious of unvaried prosperity; and all human life if not condemned to calamity, is at least liable to accident. Whoever has uninterruptedly enjoyed a prosperous tide of success, may be justly called fortunate, but cannot before his death be entitled to the epithet of happy.”

Such is the view of human philosophy—the instruction of the Bible is—

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” * * * “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding—in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the

labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

In this comparison I ought not to omit the following powerful passages—first—from Shakspeare—

"Death is a fearful thing;
And a shamed life, a hateful:
To die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and this delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world:—Or to be worse than worst
Of those that lawless and incertain thoughts
Imagine howling!—'tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is paradise
To what we fear of death."

This passage from Revelation—

"And I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Since then the mind is formed by the sentiments and truths gathered by it; its frame, its disposition, its temperament moulded and made by these sentiments and truths; can you entertain a doubt, which class of those brought before you in this comparison, will most strengthen, refine and expand it, and impart most self-possession, fortitude and equanimity? We need not rest upon the theory of this matter: in actual life, common experiences, we can find irrefragable proof. Gibbon discarded the Bible: his mind was richly stored with literature and philosophy. I will quote the last paragraph of his life, written by himself at a time when his condition would seem to be that of earthly happiness. His residence was at Lausanne, overlooking the lake of Geneva, in the most beautiful country and delicious

climate of the world. His circumstances were perfect ; he had all he wanted. He was an accomplished scholar ; he had solitude and society within his choice, and every thing to gratify his taste in each. He says of himself—

“ When I contemplate the common lot of mortality I must acknowledge, that I have drawn a high prize in the lottery of life.”

I proceed with the quotation—

“ The present is a fleeting moment ; the past is no more ; and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful. This day may possibly be my last ; but the laws of probability, so true in general, so fallacious in particular, still allow about fifteen years. I shall soon enter into that period which as the most agreeable of his long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of the sage Fontenelle. His choice is approved by the eloquent historian of nature, who fixes our moral happiness to the mature season in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established upon a solid basis. In private conversation that great and amiable man added the weight of his own experience ; and this autumnal felicity might be exemplified by the lives of Voltaire, Hume, and many other men of letters. I am inclined far more to embrace than to dispute this comfortable doctrine. I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body ; but I most reluctantly observe, that two causes, the abbreviation of time and the failure of hope, will always tinge with a browner shade the evenings of life.”

In contrast I place the reflections, also written by himself, of one whose character was formed by the Bible, upon the closing of his life :—a life that had been spent in privation and hardship, and was about to be terminated by a public execution.

His words are—

“ For the which cause I also suffer these things ; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. * * * * For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight ; I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

The infidel himself would rather have Paul's spirit than Gibbon's. The enjoyment of Paul in the extremity of wretchedness, so far as outward circumstances could form it, is to be coveted in comparison with Gibbon's gloomy forecast while in possession of all that earth could afford to make him happy.

What brighter minds than of Demosthenes and Cicero ? both schooled in the highest class of philosophy, and adorned with its richest gifts ; both as much noted for want of energy and firmness, for not being equal to emergencies, as they were renowned for superior mental endowments. The mind of Martin Luther was formed by

the Bible. Whenever in his eventful life he met disaster or was exposed to peril, his voice rose in the xlvith Psalm—

“God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

And what was his character? With a warm and tender heart under a sense of his faults he would weep like a child; but in danger he was firm and undaunted. Amid events most alarming he was never seen to falter. When earnestly dissuaded by his trembling, anxious friends from obeying the summons that called him to the diet of Worms, where he would be in the power of enemies whose common implements of discipline were the rack and the stake, he replied, it is *my duty* to go; and I would go although I should encounter as many devils as there are tiles in their houses. We could adduce the character of Hampden, Cromwell and their associates who sustained the liberty of England in its extremity. We could cite the first settlers of New England who patiently went through hardships appalling even in the narrative. We could quote Hume, that it was owing to the Puritans, there was a vestige of freedom in Britain. All these men were formed by the Bible: as remarkable for strength of intellect as moral excellence, they are witnesses, that it imparts surpassing wisdom and purity and power.—It has been so common to stigmatize one of them, Cromwell, with hypocrisy, that this has been branded upon his character. But recollect, who wrote his history:—men who could break open his grave, and rob the worms of his consuming body to hang it in chains for the gratification of their unforgiving and dastardly malice. Falsehood has been so blended with fact in his memoirs, that we cannot expect to find the truth. But there are facts prominent upon the face of the time, which cannot be hid nor disfigured. It is fact, that by the force of his character he led undisciplined troops from victory to victory over king, veteran officers and trained soldiers: and it is fact, that when he had established himself in the government, he so conducted it, that the name of Englishman was never more respected, the power of England never more firmly established, the prosperity of England never more effectually promoted, the laws of England never better administered, and civil and religious liberty never more fully enjoyed in England, than under his administration.

Prejudice kindred to that before noticed will answer to all this, and

our inclinations will advocate the suggestion, that the sentiments and truths of the Bible, worthy indeed of all admiration, are not *practical* in this fallen world—not suited to our present condition. To maintain this, the passage first quoted “Love your enemies” *** “that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven,” will be relied upon as demonstration. We in our circumstances and with our dispositions, “love our enemies!” We with our frailties, “*the children*” of God! Shakspeare will be cited, for he is the poet of nature, as teaching the true practical lesson on this point. “Beware of entrance to a quarrel, but being in, bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee.” Some years ago I read a laboured exposition of the Bible precepts of meekness, and love to enemies, insisting that what the language imports, could not be intended. “Our passions,” said the expositor, “are implanted in us for use. Our anger is necessary for our defence and security, for precaution against insult and wrong.”—If we will candidly examine facts, we shall find conclusive refutation of these superficial (for although plausible, they are very superficial) suggestions. We can be at no loss for instances of persons who by irascibleness have much diminished their respectability and usefulness. Common experiences come in and protest, that the occasions of all others most numerous of men becoming ashamed of themselves, reflecting upon themselves with self-loathing, wishing they could tear passages from their lives, are effects of irritability. Men, through indulged and gratified malevolence may become hardened, so as to look back with vain-glorious complacency upon sorrows which they have made others feel, upon the harm they have done them:—but certainly a just estimate will pronounce, that nothing can be more deplorable in the life of men than quarrels so borne as to exemplify the expression, “*beware of thee.*” Who would have such a character? It was the mark of Cain! Remorse is not always felt in this world: the worm that never dies, is in the world to come.

For precaution against insult, the precept of the Bible is the perfection of wisdom; while the maxims of worldly prudence which we have just passed in review, lead in the direct way of it. Their guard against it, is in close contact with it. Nothing can be more self-evident, than that the man who relies upon his passions for his security, will come in conflict with the passions of others. Hence the irritable have abundant cause of anger; defiance and insult lie in their beaten path. But I have yet to see the man who will treat with disrespect one who takes pains properly to appreciate others and himself. Our cool judgments must stand self-convinced, that elevated principle, conscientious

to do good and make happy, is far, far from strife. No angry elements can be found near such a principle : it supplies no food for them. I do not resort to the apothegm,

“ A moral, sensible and well-bred man,
Will not offend me, and no other can ;”

but I hold it to be common sense, obvious to every one, that he who takes for his guidance in this matter the instruction of the Bible, will meet universal respect ; or if there may be exceptions, these certainly cannot be of persons to whose level a decent man can degrade himself by quarrelling with them. The instruction is profitable, conducive to respectability, meliorating to the disposition, certain in its results to find favour with every kind of temperament, fraught with true practical wisdom constantly called for and always expedient. So are all Bible instructions. Omniscience and infinite wisdom and goodness may be safely trusted.

The greatest difficulty in the way of persuading men to make the Bible a manual directory of their lives, is inconsiderateness. **WHAT IS NEEDED**, is suitable deliberation, thoughtfulness appropriate to the subject, so as to form an opinion becoming it. The points involved are of a character, not to be slightly considered, nor recklessly determined by any one. I speak not of religion in any of its bearings ; but as each of you believes his own immortality, and your conscience does not allow you to doubt your moral accountable agency, in these facts you have the truths pressed upon you as certainties from which there can be no escape, that the being of each of you will be commensurate with the being of God, and that on you rests the tremendous responsibility of determining the condition of that being for time and eternity : a responsibility truly tremendous, if you alone were concerned, but heightened by the fact that your determination will affect all who associate with, and all who observe you. If you take this view long enough to have the objects of it fixed in your sight, so as to have distinct perception of them, you will feel, that here are important points to be pondered ; and that it is the madness of folly not to allow them their weight : with this impression you will look to the Bible, *grateful* that you have in it a sure guide, an unerring counsellor, an unfailing light.

But it seems beyond the reach of effort to prevail on men to think what the Bible is : what it is according to their own full belief. There are many hinderances to its reception into familiar use. There is so much said about it in formal harangues, that on the one hand the

common mind is surfeited, and rejects the subject : on the other it is deemed doing enough to talk in its praise. Politics too have laid their hands upon it and forced it into dirty work. "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*," was never more applicable. Light and fashionable reading has associated it, under professed reverence, with sneers that disqualify many minds from regarding respect for it otherwise than as superstitious infirmity. To give a specimen : a book with the title of *Eothen* published with great commendation, and extolled at least in one Theological Review, has this sentence, "As an old woman, deeply trustful, sits reading her Bible because of the world to come ; so as though it would fit me for the common strife of this temporal world, I read and read the Iliad." Such a sneer produces more effect, than the subtilty of Hume, the insidiousness of Gibbon, and the malignity of Voltaire.

The arguments deduced from the character of Luther, Hampden, and his co-patriots, and the Pilgrim fathers, may be met with the reply, "these men were raised up for emergencies ; the times were extraordinary and produced minds of uncommon cast." But can an educated young man in this country looking upon the field before him, considering what he ought to render for the advantages he has enjoyed, what his friends and relatives sanguinely expect from him, discern the lack of any thing in his own case to constitute "emergency?" Emergencies differ. The emergency that exacts daring and energy to pluck liberty from the cannon's mouth, requires less than that which presents the duty to lay for it solid foundation and secure it by proper defences. The emergencies which attend an ingenuous spirit, making his way through this cold, misjudging world, seeming to have no eyes for modest worth, and to be in love with worthlessness and impudence, are greater than those through which a thorough-going reformer presses his onward course. We can say to any man, that his immortality and moral accountableness constitute emergency enough to call out his full strength, and put in requisition all his resources. Especially the time upon which you are thrown, and in which I trust, you are to have a full part of honour to yourselves and good to your country, is not devoid of properties constituting emergency in its most intense sense. Luther broke the spell of the Papacy: Hampden and the patriots of his time wrote in their own blood the worth and the way of civil and religious liberty: the colonial settlers of our country by their sufferings prepared for this liberty place and accommodation, where it grew with vigor and expanded into fullness: the generation preceding that of which I am a part, achieved its victories and crowned it with triumph: its appropriate institutions have

been reared, and it is enjoyed, in the amplitude of its blessings, throughout the length and breadth of our land ; but it is the belief of many wise men, that the most arduous difficulty is yet to come. Within a few years I have often heard men of first standing and intelligence express in conversation decisive opinions, that the insubordination which our institutions cannot curb, must destroy them. An individual not long since informed me, that the inquiry, "What certain signs in sections of our country portended to the government," being addressed to one of the most prominent and powerful men of our nation, his answer was positive, "the machine will run down ; all we can do, is to prepare for it : " another person of equal prominence gave the same answer : my informant added with emphatic incredulity, "how is it possible to sustain our institutions with government so weak, and the spirit of lawlessness and misrule so rife and reckless." If you will make the Bible the text-book of your life, as I have urged you to do, you will appreciate my reasons for a different opinion ; for I have strong confidence, that our institutions will be perpetual ; not as ours only, but that they will overspread the earth. Think, what interest not only this nation, but mankind have in these institutions. They constitute the only system of well-regulated liberty ever devised by man. You are well aware, that the ancient republics of Greece and Rome were radically defective ; by turns licentious and despotic.—Any systems of government less thoroughly imbued with the principles of liberty than ours, must become oppressive to the mass of people. That of Great Britain abounds with the elements of freedom. Their press is free and powerful : their laws are wise, and administered with surpassing integrity and ability : their legislation is enlightened and pure : yet in no nation on earth is the mass of the people so crushed by the operation of the government.

The difficulty, too, of establishing a well-constructed system of free government should be weighed. The revolution of Charles I. of England put the whole power in the hands of the people ; but they could not establish constitutional liberty. The same is true of the revolution in France. In Spain, revolution has followed revolution ; but there is no liberty. In Spanish America, the different States have been for years modelling governments, and have attained nothing but the evils of anarchy. This nation alone has succeeded ; and there were difficulties attending this success, which should be a standing warning to us not to hold it loosely. Should our present system "run down," to use the expression that has been emphatically and ominously applied to it, where are the hopes of civil and religious liberty !

We repeat our full conviction, that it will not run down. There is a blessing in it, to preserve and perpetuate it. Upon this subject there are causes leading strongly to mistake. Mischiefs in its nature is prominent and alarming: the operation of good is secret and silent; we see the effects, and wonder whence they came. This is a wise arrangement of Providence to supply our lack of vigilance on the one hand, and on the other to preclude presumption that would produce supineness. Beside, we are apt to confine our observation to the state of things immediately under our eye, and to receive deepest impression from what we most dislike and dread. The persons whose desponding presages I have repeated, have formed their opinions, upon view of isolated transactions of baneful character and gloomy portent: they are wise men; and their opinions are wise as conclusions from the facts of which they are predicated: but these are not all the facts; there are transactions at the same time and in the same community, not bearing directly on those which are the subjects of their apprehension, but upholding social order, and a hundred fold more numerous, which they have not seen at all; and they have formed their judgments without a thought of them. I consider, that no one can take a deliberate and searching view of the condition of any part of our country with which I am acquainted, for the last forty years, without perceiving great and general improvement. This improvement has been produced by an onward motion visible neither in its causes nor progress, but palpable in its results. There are particular things with which you must contend, much worse than any with which we have had to contend: and we have had advantages, that you will not have. But you have other advantages that we have not enjoyed: there will be more and greater calls upon your moral and intellectual powers, than there have been upon ours; and if you are faithful to come up to the full requisition of these calls, you will effect much more than we have done.

There is another cause of mistake leading them who are under it, to gloomy apprehensions with respect to the issue of our institutions. No small portion of our people, comprehending a large proportion of the wealthy, and the educated, belong to the conservative class of society. Their ruling passion is to keep things as they are; all their interests are felt to jar with the least motion. But there is no greater certainty, that the earth must move, than that free mind full of hopes and anticipations, must move: motion is an essential attribute of one as of the other. There would be alarm therefore at any rate: but the very anxiety and effort of conservatism produce in the other portion of

society, largest in numbers and exercised with little concern about consequences, a spirit of *radicalism* heightened by the disposition and effort opposed to it. The operation of both, one driving onward, the other holding back, while it may be producing on the whole a just medium, a proper rate of advancement, is terrible to those whose great object is to stand still. Of the two evils, that of *too slow* or *too rapid* motion, in this country we must have the last. Changes cannot be avoided: they must and will take place, until all our institutions shall be assimilated to the structure of our civil polity, with the same pervading principle of popular control. This I believe to be the true source of popular improvement; and that from it will proceed the motive and regulating power that will impart to all our people capacity to enjoy civil and religious liberty, and will and ability to perpetuate it.

But these things will not work themselves out, by any natural operation. It will not do, to look upon our system of government and society, as a mechanical construction of adjusted and regulating powers, certain to do the proper work, if you will keep the driving wheel in motion. It is a combination of the minds and wills of free and independent men, under moral influences producing moral results, each individual having efficient personal agency—to do harm or to do good. That in such a system there must be power of evil, is obvious. The remarks which I have made, and the testimony I have adduced, prove that in our system this is a mighty power. For salutary action, for successful result, there must be superior countervailing power. Probably the time will never be, when the preservation of our institutions will not be matter of solicitude to all the wise and good, and call for their best efforts. My confidence of their *preservation*, does not arise from an opinion, that this will be easy,—a matter of course; but from a firm persuasion that in this nation there will always be the adequate and appropriate power, and the virtue to put it forth. Of this nation you are a part; and it is incumbent upon you to contribute your share, your full share proportionate to the advantages which distinguish you, toward forming within it, this power and virtue. Wise men say, that our institutions involving our own welfare and the hopes of mankind, are exposed to great danger. You can do something to avert the catastrophe; you can do something to heal the social maladies that occasion the danger. Under such circumstance, shall any thing which either of you can do or render, be omitted or kept back? Will either of you allow, that any ability to which you can train your faculties, any influence which the moral elevation of your character can accumulate, shall be lacking, when needed for such a purpose?

I am fully aware, that upon looking over the field of life before you and seeing the difficulties in your way, you can hardly admit the idea of duty to live for the enlarged purpose of national security and advancement. The thought naturally arises, "I shall scarcely be able to sustain myself, what shall I have to spare for the arduous work of rescuing society from desolation?"

I have heard the reply upon presenting an object of common interest for common support, "I can do nothing, you certainly do not expect any thing from me, I ought not to be called upon." Why, there is no such thing in the universe. In the infinite variety of the works of creation nothing was made for mere lumber. Every one has something to do; every one can do much. You can bring into the common stock what is essentially efficient, and without which nothing can be efficient, moral worth and intellectual ability; and you can elevate these to any standard, which you can have resolution to fix. Early in life I was delighted with the sentiment, "In brave attempts 'tis glorious even to fail:" subsequent observation has taught me, that brave attempts do not fail. You can exercise useful diligence; and we have quoted it as an axiom, "useful diligence will at last prevail:" it is the most important element of efficiency. It is no plea, to say, I am only an individual. Who is any thing more? All the sanative virtue of the nation must be found in individual character. Our institutions define to man as an individual, his right; and they rely upon man as an individual, for their value and security. All the good you can individually do, all the respectability you can individually attain, all the force of character you can individually acquire, all the worth moral and intellectual you can individually gather, will enter into the common stock and redound to the general honour and safety; while all the harm arising from your conduct and example, all deficiency through your want of enterprise and diligence, firmness and perseverance, will not only be felt by yourselves in its withering effect upon your own well-being, but will detract from the common resources for national improvement and preservation.

Our national prosperity is the fruit of the moral and intellectual worth and power of our people—of these properties pervading our communities, exercised in different measures by individuals, the lowly as well as those of higher rank; for usefulness is by no means confined to the conspicuous. Force of character the effect of self-discipline, integrity, a disposition to be useful, well-directed and untiring industry, constitute individual efficiency; and the aggregate, the power of society for its advancement, defence and protection. We repeat in this connection, we look to each of you for your full part: not an iota of your moral and intellectual ability can be spared: all, in fulness, is needed. You do not live for yourselves: the nation claims each of you for its son; and it is the high privilege of each of you to be its ornament and blessing.

We who are about leaving the stage of action, have hearts filled with glorious hopes for our country. We cannot live to accomplish them ourselves;—take and fulfill them.